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STATE OF MICHIGAN
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
LANSING



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OF PUBLIC INSTRUCTION

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TO: Intermediate and Local District Superintendents; Intermediate School District Directors of Special Education; Intermediate School District Special Education Approvals Contacts; Institutions of Higher Education with School Social Work Training Programs; Department of Community Health, Department of Corrections; and Department of Human Services

FROM: Jacquelyn J. Thompson, Ph.D., Director
Office of Special Education and Early Intervention Services

SUBJECT: School Social Worker Approvals

Enclosed is information from the Office of Special Education and Early Intervention Services (OSE/EIS) on the revised procedures for issuing temporary approval for the employment of school social workers. The OSE/EIS conducted public hearings and received public comment from August 13 through October 13, 2004, on the proposed changes for school social worker approval.

The new procedures provide the opportunity for Michigan's institutions of higher education (IHE) to issue an SSW-310 form directly to those candidates who have completed all school social worker requirements pursuant to Michigan's Administrative Code R 340.1012. The SSW-310 form will suffice as the required documentation needed for employment purposes for school districts to begin the approval process through the intermediate school district (ISD). This process would eliminate the need for a letter of eligibility for employment that an IHE had previously provided to persons who had finished all the requirements for temporary approval as a school social worker.

We hope that you find this helpful in processing school social worker approvals. The OSE/EIS staff will cover this topic in the approvals' training sessions conducted for ISDs in the fall of 2005. If you have any questions, please contact Roxanne Balfour at (517) 335-0468.

Enclosures

OSE/EIS 05-05

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SCHOOL SOCIAL WORKER

By authority conferred on the state board of education by section 11, 317d, and 772a of Act No. 269 of the Public Acts of 1955, as added, being SS340.11, 340.317d, and 340.772a of the Michigan Compiled Laws)

R 340.1001--R 340.1010 Rescinded.

History: 1954 ACS 51, Eff. Aug. 15, 1967; rescinded 1954 ACS 92, Eff. Sept. 8, 1977; 1979 AC.

R 340.1011 Functions of school social worker.

Rule 1. Among other functions, a school social worker may:

(a) Identify problems and situations interfering with ability of children to make optimal use of the educational experience.

(b) Provide a problem-solving service to children and their families, through individual, group, and community social work methods, so as to enable those served to cope with problems adversely affecting the ability of children to make optimal use of the educational experience.

(c) Serve as liaison between the school, the home, and the community in building and maintaining positive relationships.

(d) Coordinate and develop resources within and outside the school system for use by children, their families, and school personnel.

(e) Collaborate with principals, teachers, and other school personnel to improve use of existing school programs and procedures, as well as to plan and implement new programs and procedures related to the educational, social, and emotional needs of children.

(f) Coordinate or serve as a member of diagnostic teams and educational planning and placement committees and provide biological, psychological, and sociological assessment information related to planning for children with adjustment problems.

(g) Provide to the educational planning and placement committees comprehensive, diagnostic evaluations of children suspected of being emotionally impaired, and collaborate with the educational planning and placement committees in the determination of eligibility of persons for programs and services for the emotionally impaired in accordance with R 340.1706 and R 340.1722 of the Michigan Administrative Code.

(h) Serve as consultant to basic classroom program personnel for the emotionally impaired, and provide direct therapy and intervention services for children identified as emotionally impaired.

(i) Participate with school staff in altering situations adversely affecting the personal, social-emotional, and academic development of children.

(j) Foster professional development through in-service education of school social work staff, including interns, paraprofessionals, and volunteers, and through planning, conducting, and participating in workshops for these and other school personnel.

History: 1954 ACS 92, Eff. Sept. 8, 1977; 1979 AC.

R 340.1012 Qualifications of school social worker.

Rule 2. (1) For approval as a school social worker, an applicant shall have completed a master's degree from an graduate school of social work program approved by the state board of education. The degree program shall consist of a 2-year graduate course or equivalent, including appropriate methods courses and a minimum of a 500 clock hour supervised social work practicum.

(2) In addition to the requirements of subrule (1), an applicant for temporary approval as a school social worker shall have submitted to the department of education a written recommendation for temporary approval from the approved university school of social work training program. Temporary approval shall be granted a school social worker for the initial year of service.

(3) Full approval as a school social worker shall be contingent upon written documentation from the employing school district of satisfactory completion of 1 year as a school social worker with direction from a fully approved school social worker, or as otherwise authorized by the state board of education.

(4) A previously approved school social worker who has not been employed as a school social worker in an approved program in Michigan for 5 or more consecutive years shall obtain reapproval from the state board of education as a condition of reemployment.

History: 1954 ACS 92, Eff. Sept. 8, 1977; 1979 AC.

R 340.1013 Approval of training program.

Rule 3. A school social work training program maintained by an institution of higher education in this state shall be approved by the state board of education. An approved program shall be in compliance with the competency requirements under R 340.1014.

History: 1954 ACS 92, Eff. Sept. 8, 1977; 1979 AC.

R 340.1014 Competencies of school social worker.

Rule 4. (1) A school social worker shall possess applicable knowledge of:

(a) Individual, family, group, and community dynamics, as well as mental health concepts and behavior which result from mental, physical, sensory, emotional, speech, or any other handicapping conditions.

(b) Educational organization, delivery systems, and the school as a social institution.

(c) Varying lifestyles, and their influence and counter-influence on learning and school-community relations.

(d) The learning process as it relates to the developmental stages of children.

(e) Learning patterns, including actual and potential impediments to learning.

(f) The legislative process and impact of law on education.

(g) Structure, function, and policy of major human services organizations.

(h) Value and ethical constraints within which the social work profession operates.

(i) Research, evaluation, tests, and measurements.

(2) A school social worker should possess ability and skills as follows:

(a) Ability to recognize deficits in learning patterns and to develop plans with school personnel for alternative learning experiences.

(b) Skill in systematic observation and assessment of the individual pupil or groups of pupils in problem situations and the ability to formulate appropriate plans of action.

(c) Skill in the selective collection of information and documentation of biological, psychological, sociological and environmental factors which affect the learning process.

(d) Skill in identifying and assessing the social-emotional needs of pupils and the ability to design appropriate interventions to enhance the learning environment in the school.

(e) Ability to communicate to appropriate persons, such as the school superintendent, principal, supervisor, and the educational planning and placement committee, regarding socio-developmental findings, goals and objectives, and intervention strategies, as well as outcomes and recommendations.

(f) Skill in identifying and developing resources within and outside a school system.

(g) Skill in providing appropriate direct or indirect treatment services to individuals, groups, families, and the school community.

(h) Ability to share social work knowledge and skills with team members and professionals, parents, pupils, and others in the areas of mental health, human behavior, and child management.

History: 1954 ACS 92, Eff. Sept. 8, 1977; 1979 AC.

R 340.1015 Out-of-state applicants.

Rule 5. (1) An applicant for school social work approval in this state who has been educated in an accredited school of social work in another state shall present evidence of having fulfilled all of the requirements established for applicants who have been educated in the approved Michigan universities.

(2) Temporary approval as a school social worker may be granted to an applicant from another state who presents evidence of graduation from an institution of higher education if the school of social work was accredited at the time of graduation by a national social work education accrediting agency approved by the state board of education.

(3) Full approval will be granted in accordance with R 340.1012(2).

History: 1954 ACS 92, Eff. Sept. 8, 1977; 1979 AC.

R 340.1016 Presently employed school social worker.

Rule 6. (1) A person employed by a school district and fully approved as a school social worker on the effective date of these rules shall retain full approval status.

(2) A person employed by a school district as a school social worker with temporary approval on the effective date of these rules shall not be denied approval to continue in the same position, but shall complete the previous requirements for full approval within 2 years. There shall be no time extensions granted beyond 2 years from the effective date of these rules.

History: 1954 ACS 92, Eff. Sept. 8, 1977; 1979 AC.

R 340.1017 Use of title "school social worker."

Rule 7. Only those persons approved by the state board of education as school social workers, in accordance with these rules, shall use that title.

History: 1954 ACS 92, Eff. Sept. 8, 1977; 1979 AC.

R 340.1018 Rescission.

Rule 8. The rules of the state board of education entitled "State Aid for School Social Work Programs," being R 340.1001 to R 340.1010 of the Michigan Administrative Code and appearing on pages 4218 and 4219 of the 1967 Annual Supplement to the Code, are rescinded.

History: 1954 ACS 92, Eff. Sept. 8, 1977; 1979 AC.

Michigan Department of Education
Office of Special Education & Early Intervention Services
TEMPORARY APPROVAL FOR SCHOOL SOCIAL WORKER
Policy & Criteria

POLICY

1. A request for temporary approval as a school social worker may be initiated by either a candidate who is not employed as a school social worker or the employing LEA/ISD/State Agency when all criteria for approval have been met.
2. A college/university with an approved school of social work training program will issue recommendations for temporary approval to candidates, upon completion of such program.
3. Temporary approval as a school social worker is transferable from one employer to the next.
4. Temporary approval as a school social worker expires at the end of the school year in which it is issued.
5. A request for approval must be received by the Michigan Department of Education during the school year (July 1 to June 30) in which the effective date applies. Approval requests received after June 30 of the applicable school year will not be processed.
6. A search for a candidate with full approval as a school social worker is not required prior to hiring a candidate under temporary approval.
7. Temporary approval as a school social worker is effective from the beginning of the school year in which it is requested, the date that the candidate completed all training requirements, or the date of employment in the position of school social worker, whichever is later.
8. Candidates who have not been employed in a 5 year period after completing School Social Worker requirements and receiving either their SSW-310 or Temporary Approval; will be subject to reapproval from their training institution.
9. Full approval as a school social worker will be contingent upon written documentation from the employing school district of satisfactory completion of 1 year as a school social worker with direction from a fully approved school social worker, or as otherwise authorized by the state board of education.

CRITERIA

1. The candidate must hold an earned master's degree in Social Work from a graduate school of social work program approved by the state board of education.
2. The candidate must have a minimum of a 500 clock hour supervised social work practicum.
3. The candidate must receive a recommendation for temporary approval from the approved university school of social work training program.

PROCEDURE

The University/College will:

1. Complete form REC: SSW-310 to verify the candidate has completed all requirements and is eligible for temporary approval as a School Social Worker.
2. Provide candidate with original copy of REC: SSW-310 or to ISD upon their request.
3. University/College may retain a copy of form REC: SSW-310.

If the request is initiated by employer:

The employer (LEA/ISD/State Agency-facility) will:

1. Initiate the request by completing the Temporary Approval for School Social Worker request form. The following information **MUST** be completed:
 - Candidate and Assignment information. See Policy #4.
2. Forward the Temporary Approval for School Social Worker request form and copy of REC: SSW-310, if provided by candidate to the ISD; retain a copy for your records.

The ISD will:

1. Complete Question 1 and 2 on the request form.
2. Request a copy of REC: SSW-310 form from college/university, if not provided by LEA/ISD/State Agency.
3. Submit request electronically to MDE-OSE/EIS and print off Approval letter that is generated automatically after submission.
4. Retain a copy of the approval letter. Distribute a copy to the employer.

The employer (LEA/ISD/State Agency-facility) will:

- Distribute a copy to the candidate.

If the request is initiated by a candidate not employed as an SSW:

The candidate will:

1. Initiate the request by forwarding a copy of the completed university/college REC: SSW-310 form to:

Office of Special Education and Early Intervention Services
Attention: Roxanne Balfour
Michigan Department of Education
P.O. Box 30008
Lansing, Michigan 48909

2. Retain a copy for your records.

The Michigan Department of Education will:

1. Review form REC: SSW-310 for completeness and accuracy.
2. Process and print Approval letter that is generated automatically after submission.
3. Retain a copy of the approval letter.
4. Distribute a copy to the candidate.